

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #70-48 Building Date: ca. 1892
Building Name: Miller-Christensen House
Location: 9032 Stevens Lane, Lanham, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Miller-Christensen House is a two-story frame cross-gable cottage of roughly cruciform plan. The west (main) facade exhibits a variation of the gable-front-and-wing plan. The southerly portion of the gable front is cut away on first story level, and the second story is cantilevered over part of the west porch. The west facade continues south from the principal entrance, forming a one-bay-by-one-bay gable-roof wing. Sheltering the entrance and filling the southwest corner is a one-story hip-roof porch, supported by plain square posts. The porch rests on concrete piers with some lattice infill. The house is covered with German siding, painted white, but the surface is varied by the use of seven courses of lapped rectangular shingle to form a division between first and second stories. The cornice is plain and boxed, with some overhang; the rafter ends, where they are exposed, have a decorative concave profile. The principal west facade is highlighted by a small square tower with a pyramidal roof, set into the southwest corner of gable front and wing. Extending to the north on the same axis as the south wing is a one-story kitchen wing.

Significance:

The Miller-Christensen House is a good example of a suburban cottage of the late Victorian vernacular style. It is distinguished by its pyramidal-roof tower, and the use of shingles to vary the surfaces. This cottage was built in the 1890's on land which had belonged to Mary L. Stevens, postmistress of "Lanhams" in 1879. A small portion of this land, 3/5 acre, was resold to Jennie Turner in 1891, and on this lot Mrs. Turner built the subject cottage, probably as a vacation home. In 1896 the Turners sold the cottage and 3/5 acre to Daniel B. Miller. Miller's suburban cottage represents a type of dwelling which was popular at the end of the nineteenth century, when the railroad made it possible for city dwellers to escape their urban environment and maintain a part-time suburban retreat. Very few of these suburban retreat cottages have survived, and the Miller-Christensen House is an important landmark today in the railroad community of Lanham.

Acreage: 2.48 acres

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Miller House

and/or common Christensen House

2. Location

street & number 9032 Stevens Lane ___ not for publication

city, town Lanham ___ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name James Christensen

street & number 9032 Stevens Lane telephone no.:

city, town Lanham state and zip code Md. 20706

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #4754

street & number Main Street folio 254

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

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Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Miller-Christensen House is a two-story frame cross-gable cottage of roughly cruciform plan. It stands in a small rural oasis in the old railroad community of Lanham. The house is distinguished by its use of tower and dormers to vary the roofline, and shingles to enliven the wall surfaces.

The house faces west, and the west facade exhibits a variation of the gable-front-and-wing plan. In this case, however, the southerly portion of the gable front is cut away on first story level, and the second story is cantilevered over part of the west porch. Entrance is in the bay beneath the cantilevered section, through a door with single-pane transom and plain board surround.

The west facade continues south from the principal entrance, forming a one-bay-by-one-bay gable-roof wing. Sheltering the door and filling the southwest corner (formed by the gable front and south wing) is a one-story hip-roof porch, supported by plain square posts. The porch rests on concrete piers with some lattice infill. The second story window in the west facade of the south wing breaks through the eaves, forming a small cross-gable with boxed cornice.

The house is covered with German siding, painted white, but the surface is varied by the use of seven courses of lapped rectangular shingle to form a division between first and second stories. Windows are 1/1 and 2/2 double hung sash with plain board surrounds and no shutters. The cornice is plain and boxed, with some overhang; the rafter ends, where they are exposed, have a decorative concave profile. The gable roof is covered with red asphalt shingle, and is pierced by two gable dormers (at second story level) in the north plane of the gable front section. Each dormer has a plain boxed cornice, and encloses a 2/2 double hung sash window. A single central stuccoed brick chimney rises from the juncture of the cross-gable roofs. The building rests on a foundation of uncoursed local stone, which encloses a basement.

The principal west facade is highlighted by a small square tower, set into the southwest corner of gable front and wing. It has pyramidal roof covered with red asphalt shingle; a 2/2 window lights its south face and a louvered window its west face.

Extending to the north on the same axis as the south wing is a one-story kitchen wing. This north wing is flanked by later additions. A low shed-roof "mud-room" to the east is covered with unpainted shingle. To the west, a larger shed-roof addition (enclosed porch) rests on a high stone foundation, and is lighted by a bank of three modern windows on each of its north and west facades.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1892

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Miller-Christensen House is a good example of a suburban cottage of the late Victorian vernacular style. It is distinguished by its pyramidal-roof tower, and the use of shingles to vary the surfaces. It was built as a suburban residence in the railroad community of Lanham.

This cottage was built in the 1890's in land which had belonged to Mary L. Stevens, postmistress of "Lanhams" in 1879. Mrs. Stevens owned part of the tract known as "Warings Lot", and had two houses which fronted on the railroad just east of the Lanham station; it was she who in 1885 had provided to the School Commissioners land for the Lanham schoolhouse.¹ In 1899 and 1891, Mrs. Stevens sold the easterly portion of her land, which lay between her houses and the County road, retaining not only the right to use the spring on that land, but also a 20-foot-wide lane which connected her houses with the County road.² (Her right-of-way survives today as Stevens Lane.) A small portion of this land, 3/5 acre, was resold to Jennie Turner in 1891, and on this lot Mrs. Turner built the subject cottage, probably as a vacation home. In 1896 the Turners sold the cottage and 3/5 acre to Daniel B. Miller, who had probably leased the cottage from the Turners before buying it. The Millers made the cottage their home and gave it the name "Spring Hill."³

In 1903 the Millers sold this 3/5 acre lot and purchased the property which adjoined it to the east; on this easterly property they built a larger home in 1904, and it is in this larger house that Daniel Miller lived the rest of his life.⁴

Miller's suburban cottage represents a type of dwelling which was popular at the end of the nineteenth century; in these years, the railroad made it possible for city dwellers to escape their urban environment and maintain a part-time suburban retreat. Because very few of these suburban retreat cottages have survived, the Miller-Christensen House is an important landmark today in the railroad community of Lanham.

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10. Geographical Data

Quadrangle name Lanham, Section A

Quadrangle scale _____

B

Zone Easting Northing

D | | | | | | | | | |

[illegible]

H | | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

date August 1986

telephone 952-3521

state Md.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Description (continued)

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Directly north of the house is a one-story hip-roof cottage, roughly four bays by three, with entrance in the south facade. It is covered with board-and-batten siding painted white, has red-brown asphalt shingle on the roof, and rests on a foundation of brick and concrete block. There are two corbelled brick chimneys at the ridge. Windows in both facades of the southwest corner have been replaced with picture windows.

To the northeast, between the house and the cottage, is a small lattice garden house with pyramidal roof covered with red asphalt shingle.

This complex of buildings stands in a small rural enclave dotted with large old trees and accessible by (unpaved) Stevens Lane running west from Whitfield Chapel Road toward the Amtrak Railroad.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

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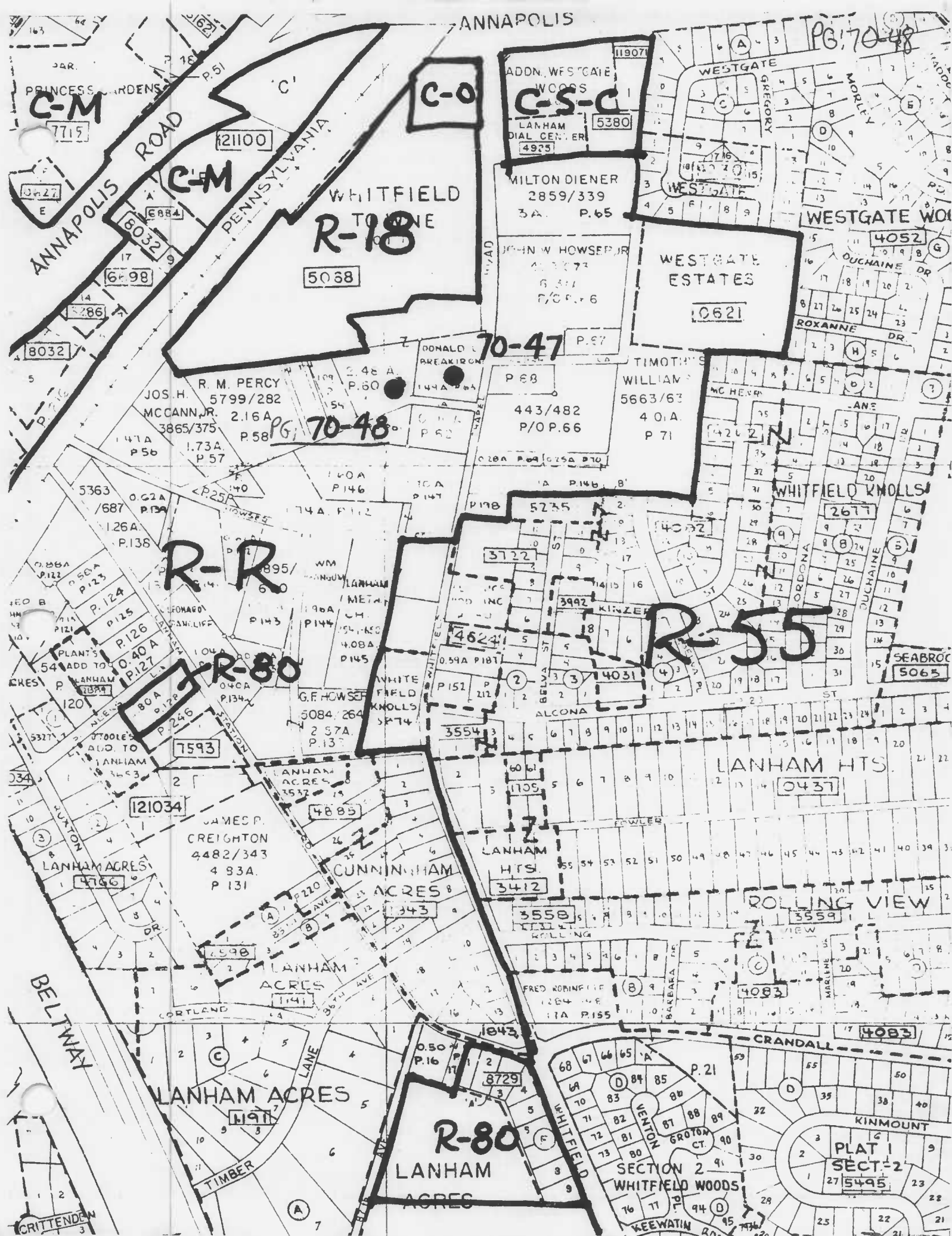
Notes.

1 G.M. Hopkins Map of the Vicinity Washington, D.C. 1894; Prince George's County Tax Assessments; 1888-1900; Prince George's County Deed JWB #4:671.

2 Prince George's County Deed JWB #18:72.

3 Prince George's County Deeds JWB #21:60; JWB #37:585; Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1890-1915.

4 Prince George's County Deeds #17:49,508. Cf. MHT form, #70-47, Miller-Breakiron House.





PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
West elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
South elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
Northwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
Southwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
Southeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#70-48

Miller-Christensen House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
East elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD